



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Washington, D.C. 20240

DEC 2 - 2002

In Reply Refer To:
FWS/AES/DCHR

Frank Rue
Commissioner
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99801-5526

Dear Mr. Rue:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is requesting proposals under the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund/Section 6 Grants to the States. Although at this time the Service has not received a final FY 2003 appropriation from Congress, we are proceeding with this request for proposals to ensure timely completion of the grant selection process once funds are appropriated.

Proposals for all three grant programs are due to our Regional Offices within 90 days of the date of this letter. Please direct your submissions to the Endangered Species Program in the appropriate Regional Office (see enclosed list). By law, these grant programs apply only to States and Territories that have current Section 6 Cooperative Agreements with the Service.

For FY 2003, as in previous years, these grant programs will be awarded through competitive proposal processes, with competition at the national level for Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grants and HCP Land Acquisition Grants, and at the regional level for Recovery Land Acquisition Grants. During the evaluation process, the Service will consider only those proposals that meet the conditions of eligibility for the specific grant program. Eligible proposals will be ranked by our Regional Offices according to factors identified on the evaluation form (enclosed) for each grant program. **For each proposal, we encourage States and Territories to submit a Project Statement summary (enclosed) that explains the needs, objectives, expected results or benefits, approach, location, and estimated cost of the proposed project.**

The States and Territories are also encouraged to complete and submit a Standard Form 424 (Application for Federal Assistance) with each proposal. If a proposal is selected for funding, this document will be required prior to awarding the grant funds. A copy of this Request for Proposals, including all evaluation forms and other materials, will also be available on our web site at <http://endangered.fws.gov/grants>.

The scoring system is designed to identify the proposals that best fulfill the purposes of the grant program. However, evaluation systems cannot accommodate all of the circumstances that may make a proposal a higher priority for funding. Circumstances that may make a proposal a higher priority include, but are not limited to, species on the brink of extinction, preventing imminent habitat loss, taking advantage of a short-term opportunity, and any other unique circumstances. We will consider these circumstances during the evaluation. We recommend that the State and Territory agencies work closely with the Service Regional or field office in addressing such circumstances in each proposal.

We encourage you to organize each proposal such that our Regional Offices can easily determine that the eligibility criteria have been met, identify information pertinent to each of the ranking factors, and recognize other considerations that contribute to the proposal's overall merit. If you will be submitting more than one proposal per grant program, please prioritize the proposals you submit in each of the programs and provide the rationale for this prioritization.

If you have questions, please contact Patrick Leonard, Chief, Division of Consultation, HCPs, Recovery, and State Grants, at (703) 358-2171.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Williams". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

DIRECTOR

Enclosures

List of Enclosures

- A. Regional Endangered Species Program Contacts
- B. Recovery Land Acquisition - Eligibility Criteria & Evaluation Form
- C. Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance - Eligibility Criteria & Evaluation Form
- D. HCP Land Acquisition - Eligibility Criteria & Evaluation Form
- E. Project Statement Form
- F. Questions & Answers
- G. Federal Aid Form - Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424) + Annotations